

Teachers in Europe believe that creativity is fundamentally important at school and that ICT can help enhance it

The European Commission has presented the results of the first-ever survey on creativity and innovation in schools. The results show that 94% of European teachers believe creativity is a fundamental competence to be developed at school, and 88% are convinced that everyone can be creative. In order to achieve that, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are considered very important among teachers (80%): computers, educational software, videos, online collaborative tools, virtual learning environments, interactive whiteboards, and free online material and courses. These results were presented at the Closing Conference of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation in Stockholm, 16 – 17 December.

An overwhelming majority of teachers believe that creativity can be applied to every domain of knowledge and to every school subject (95.5%). They do not see creativity as being only relevant for intrinsically creative subjects such as the arts, music or drama. According to this research, this is of paramount importance for the development of creative thinking as a transversal skill. Creative learning entails a component of curiosity, analysis, and imagination, accompanied by critical and strategic thinking. However, even when the majority of teachers believe everyone can be creative (88%), and that creativity is not solely a characteristic of 'eminent' people (80%), the conditions for favouring creativity are not always available in schools in Europe.

On average, half of European teachers believe that creativity plays an important role in their curriculum, and about a quarter consider that it does not. The perception of the role and relevance of creativity in the curriculum varies considerably between countries: 3 in 4 teachers in Italy, Latvia, and the United Kingdom are particularly convinced of the central role that creativity has in their national curricula. In contrast, less than 50% of teachers from Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Slovakia, Slovenia, Germany, Hungary, France and Estonia consider that creativity plays an important role in their national education system.

Training in innovative pedagogies or methods seems to be widespread in Europe. Six out of ten teachers declare that they have received training in innovative pedagogies, compared to a lower number of 4 out of 10 teachers who claim to have received training in creativity. Those who state that they received training in ICT in the classroom are only 36%. At a national level, the highest percentages are found in Romania (67%) and Latvia (66%), while the lowest were found in Germany (20%) and Belgium (21%).

The first aim of the survey has been to understand how teachers in Europe frame and conceptualise creativity. The second has been to collect information on the support they receive and need to foster students' creativity. This is the first time that a survey has collected such a high number of teachers' opinions from 32 European countries. For the purposes of the closing conference on the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, only responses from the 27 Member States of the European Union have been analysed, amounting to a total of 9 460 responses. More in-depth analysis will follow in the course of 2010 but the preliminary results presented already provide an excellent starting point to feed into future educational policy that develops learning and teaching processes in more creative and innovative ways.

The survey was launched by European Schoolnet (EUN), a network of 31 Ministries of Education in Europe and beyond, together with the Joint Research Centre's Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) with the support of the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture.

More information:

<http://ipts.irc.ec.europa.eu/publications/pub.cfm?id=2940>

Appendix

Fig.1 % of teachers agreeing with statements about creativity

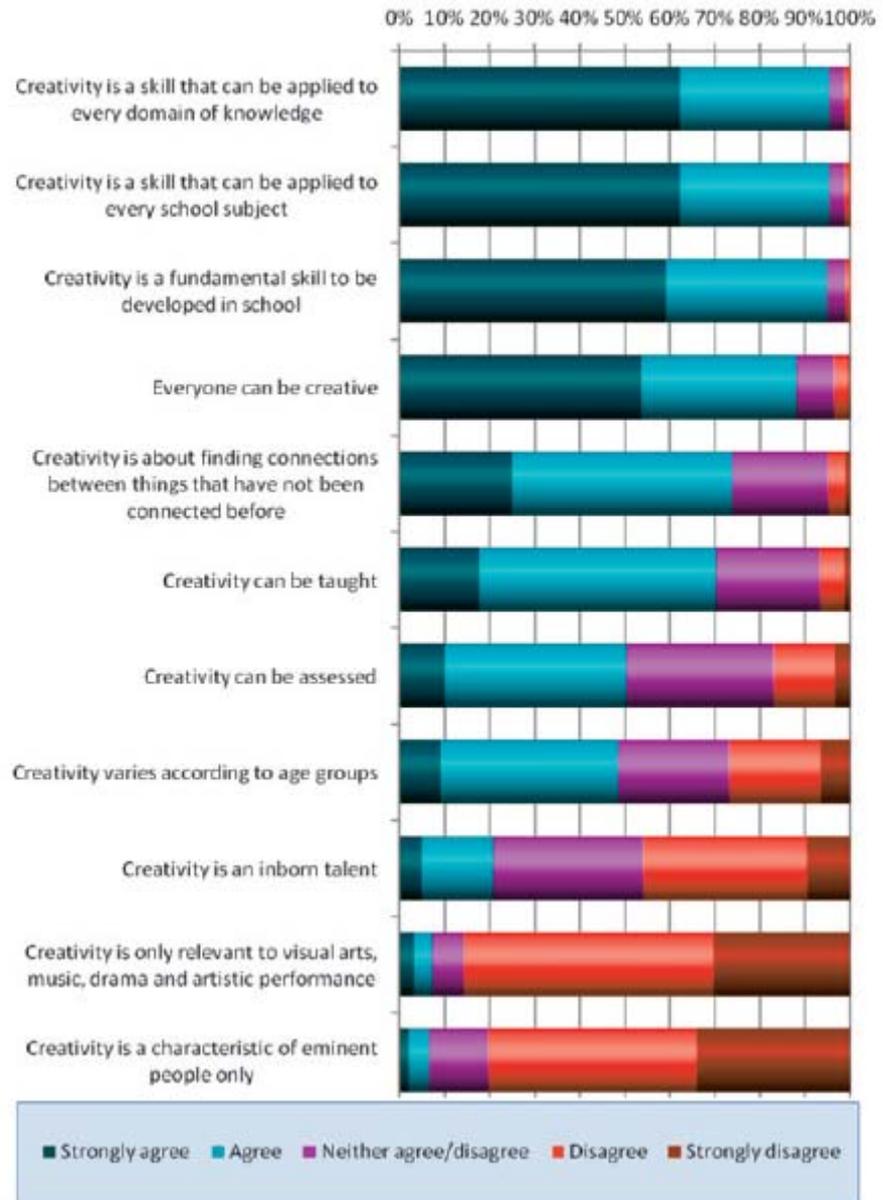


Fig.2 % of teachers by country agreeing with «ICT can be used to enhance creativity»

